# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 August 1999, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Leslie Luck (Australia)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 833rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. At the outset, could I, on behalf of the Conference's full membership, express our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Turkey for the tragic earthquake that occurred earlier this week.

I have on the list of speakers for today the representative of Pakistan. However, before giving the floor to that speaker, I should like to make some brief opening remarks as Australia assumes the presidency of the Conference.

It is a great honour for me, on behalf of Australia, to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I feel fortunate to have inherited the fruits of the unstinting efforts and the skills of my several predecessors in the presidency, and I would like to pay tribute to their achievements in conducting our work through what has been a challenging year so far. I should also like to take the opportunity to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and his deputy, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, and their staff, for their valuable advice and support.

In the role of President of the Conference, I consider that my primary responsibility is to carry forward the efforts of my predecessors to reach an agreement on a programme of work and in doing that, I will spare no effort. While I will make every attempt to faithfully represent the collective wishes of the Conference, my instinct, as an Australian President, will be to push for closure on the issues which we sense are within our grasp. I believe that there exists amongst us a general sense of goodwill and a widespread desire to reach agreement on a programme of work, if at all possible. But realistically, our time now is quite limited. The political will which is so necessary to our future work would best be demonstrated in these coming days. As my predecessor the distinguished Ambassador of Argentina concluded, there appears to be agreement on most of the elements of a comprehensive programme of work. It is essentially in two areas, PAROS and nuclear disarmament, where remaining differences prevent progress across other areas of our agenda. I believe that the spirit and common sense of purpose within this Conference would benefit greatly if we were able simply to find a way to get down to work on the basis of an agreed programme.

We all know each other's arguments well and the underlying positions which they represent. We now need to take collective responsibility and expend the goodwill necessary to narrow the current differences in our positions. This will entail a readiness to make some further compromise on the part of us all.

My other key responsibility as President is to facilitate the preparation of the Conference's annual report to the United Nations General Assembly. As you are aware, rule 44 of the Conference's rules of procedure provides that the draft report shall be made available to all members of the Conference at least two weeks before the scheduled date of its adoption. Accordingly, the draft annual report, as contained in document CD/WP.503, will be available in delegations' pigeon-holes, in all

(The President)

official languages, on Tuesday, 24 August. On Thursday, 26 August, an informal plenary meeting will be held immediately following the regular plenary meeting in order to start consideration of the draft annual report. My approach to this task will be, I hope, practical and realistic, and I would urge all delegations to take my lead on this. My motivation for this, aside from the requirement in the rules of procedure that the report must be factual in nature, is this: we find ourselves with a report to write and yet work is still to be done. In my view, these two tasks should not detract from each other. Indeed, if we can successfully direct our energies towards reaching an agreement on the programme of work, then this will in turn facilitate our task of writing the report. I should make clear that even as we commence work on the preparation of our annual report, it is my intention to continue consultations on the programme of work for as long as hope remains for an agreement.

As I tackle the two major and immediate responsibilities of the presidency during this period, I will be mindful of the expectation that I will work with delegations to help create conditions for an expeditious start to the Conference's work in the year 2000. I will look to my colleagues here for guidance and assistance in that task in the weeks ahead.

Many of you have already assured me of your full cooperation in taking forward our work over the period ahead. I sincerely thank you for those assurances and look forward to the cooperation of all delegations in ensuring that the report-writing process and the presentation of the report to the General Assembly is achieved smoothly.

With those remarks, I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan. Ambassador Akram, you have the floor.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): First of all, Mr. President, it is my pleasant duty and pleasure to express the felicitations of the Pakistan delegation to you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this critical, if not a crisis, situation for our Conference. I am confident that with your diligence, skill, and no doubt, your luck, you will succeed in doing what your predecessors unfortunately attempted with great valour but were found a little short of that magic that has to emerge.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all your predecessors, and in particular your immediate predecessor, our dear friend Ambassador González of Argentina, who not only moved forward the process of consultations and the so-called "Dembri proposals" but also succeeded in the task of expanding the Conference on Disarmament, and it is my pleasant duty to welcome both our new colleagues as well as the new members of the Conference on Disarmament today once again.

On a more sombre note, I would wish to express the deep condolences of the Government and the people of Pakistan to our brothers and sisters in Turkey for the great devastation which has been visited upon that country in

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

the earthquake which happened in the last two days. We hope and trust that the international community will provide all possible help to Turkey in overcoming this great disaster.

The year 1999 has not been a good year for disarmament. It has in particular not been a good year for the Conference on Disarmament. In our previous meetings, my delegation has had the opportunity to critically examine the nuclear doctrines of certain Powers and alliances which have impinged on the very basis of nuclear disarmament and nuclear restraint which is necessary for the promotion of the goals of nuclear disarmament and arms control in this body. Unfortunately, these negative developments have not been restricted to those major Powers. Today we are obliged to take note of the most serious development, which is the issuance of "India's nuclear doctrine", as recommended by its National Security Advisory Board, which indicates that India is about to embark on a further and even more dangerous escalation in the nuclear and conventional arms build-up. This recommended "doctrine" has been put forward as an articulation of the concept of so-called "credible minimum nuclear deterrence", which was propounded by the distinguished Prime Minister of India after India's nuclear tests last May. The recommended doctrine confirms India's craving to be recognized as a global Power - not by acting as a "responsible" member of the international community but through nuclear and conventional militarization and aggressive actions.

India has declared that it will establish "sufficient, survivable and operationally prepared nuclear forces". Thus, despite the best endeavours made by Pakistan for strategic restraint, India is likely to go ahead with the deployment and operationalization of its nuclear weapons and delivery systems. The India "doctrine" would negate several measures for mutual restraint which were identified in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Pakistan and India at the Lahore summit. It would frustrate the central purpose of the "Strategic Restraint Regime" proposed by Pakistan to India at the last round of talks (under the item on "Peace and security").

Moreover, the declaration of the proposed "doctrine" by the BJP "caretaker" Government calls into question the alleged achievements of the eight rounds of the Jaswant Singh-Talbot talks and the assurances given to Pakistan, and the international community, that India will accept some form of restraints, particularly with regard to the deployment and operationalization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. It is now evident that such assurances were the result of false promises by India or were falsely propagated to persuade Pakistan to accept one-sided commitments. Pakistan will closely follow the reactions of the major Powers to this latest intended escalation. The only hope which one major Power expressed yesterday is that India will sign the CTBT. Important as the CTBT is, its signature is hardly relevant to the scope and magnitude of the instability and danger which India will provoke by the operational deployment of the inordinately large nuclear arsenal which it envisages. It has said that it possesses the capability to develop neutron bombs. It said it will continue an R & D programme, including so-called "subcritical tests" to further develop its nuclear weapons designs. It has also embarked on various other forms of militarization.

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Neither Pakistan nor the international community can be taken in by India's so-called "no first use" policy. "No first use" has never been accepted as the basis for determining the deterrent postures of any of the nuclear-weapon States. Indeed, India itself places no credibility in "no first use". If it did, it should have accepted China's assurance of "no first use" and of the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. This would have obviated the need for India's nuclear weapons acquisition, and it would have made it unnecessary to even envisage the operational deployment of such nuclear weapons. Non-deployment, in turn, would make "no first use" declarations unnecessary.

India's "no first use" declaration is, in fact, designed to secure for itself "recognition" as a nuclear-weapon State, which would flow from the "acceptance" of its "no first use" and non-use "assurances". It is for this purpose that India has offered to ratify the non-use assurance protocol to the Treaty establishing the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

Secondly, India will seek to justify the acquisition of a large nuclear arsenal by arguing that its nuclear forces should be large enough to sustain and retaliate against a nuclear first strike. The document issued yesterday states that "nuclear weapons shall be designed and deployed to ensure survival against a first strike and to endure repetitive attrition attempts with adequate retaliatory capabilities". The Indian "doctrine" envisages a triad of nuclear forces, land-based, air-based and sea-based. This will be a huge arsenal.

A study which has recently been issued in the United States estimates that India possesses 1,600 kilograms of fissile materials, which would give it the capability to develop over 400 nuclear warheads. This estimate and the Indian nuclear doctrine which has just been propounded will have to be taken into account by Pakistan and by all those countries which are likely to be threatened by India's nuclear-weapons arsenal.

The proposed Indian "doctrine" also makes it clear that India's nuclear escalation will be accompanied by the further build-up of India's conventional warfare capabilities. The document says that a highly effective conventional military capability will be proposed. Since the vast majority of India's conventional "assets" are deployed against Pakistan, it will be obliged to respond to the Indian build-up. Moreover, the growing imbalance in conventional military capabilities will intensify Pakistan's reliance on its nuclear capabilities to deter the use or threat of aggression or domination by India. Thus, although the Indian document states that the purpose of a conventional arms build-up is to raise the nuclear threshold, in fact, the Indian conventional build-up will further lower the nuclear threshold and bring closer the danger of nuclear use in the subcontinent.

We are convinced that, following last year's nuclearization, the best option for Pakistan and India is to promote a strategic restraint regime envisaging mutual and reciprocal moderation in the nuclear, missile and conventional fields, and a serious endeavour to resolve underlying disputes, specially Jammu and Kashmir.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

Pakistan has made specific proposals to India for this purpose. We have presented a detailed paper for a strategic restraint regime, and we are now calling for an immediate resumption of bilateral talks to address Kashmir and other issues between us. India has refused so far, posing conditions and preconditions for this purpose. We call on the international community to speak out against the Indian nuclear intentions, to arrest this danger and to reverse it, and help us in resolving the underlying problem of Kashmir, without which peace is unlikely to prevail in South Asia.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me as Chair. I see that Turkey has asked for the floor. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Turkey.

Ms. SAY (Turkey): Mr. President, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency. I have asked for the floor today to express our thanks to the consuls and the delegations of brotherly participants for expressing their sympathy and condolences for the big disaster which has happened in my country. We shall definitely convey these messages to our Government. I should like to take this opportunity to express my country's appreciation and gratitude to those countries and international agencies who have immediately extended their helping hand to us at such a difficult time for my country.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Turkey for her words, and I am very pleased to hear that you will convey our thoughts to your Government. The distinguished Ambassador of India is asking for the floor. You have the floor, Madam.

Ms. KUNADI (India): Mr. President, since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, allow me to convey to you our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency and our satisfaction at seeing you guide our proceedings with such skill. We would also like to place on record our appreciation for the diligent efforts put in by the previous President, the Ambassador of Argentina, who carried forward our work in the CD.

My delegation would also like to express our deep condolences to the Government and people of Turkey for the tragic earthquake which struck that country two days ago.

It was really not my intention to seek the floor today but I have been constrained to do so in view of certain unwarranted and possibly ill-informed comments which have been made about India's policy with regard to nuclear weapons by the Ambassador of Pakistan. These comments have no basis. The facts are that the National Security Advisory Board of the Government of India had made available a draft entitled "Indian nuclear doctrine" for purposes of

(Ms. Kunadi, India)

public discussion and debate, in keeping with our commitment as a responsible nuclear-weapon State. As you would expect from the largest democracy in the world, India is committed to greater transparency in decision-making. Such an open and transparent process may not be familiar to the delegation of Pakistan. There is no change in the Indian position on the doctrine of minimum credible deterrence and its elements, as stated in the CD and other forums in the past. Attempts by the delegation of Pakistan to drag this document into the deliberations of this Conference are unfortunate and are most certainly an unproductive use of the time of this Conference.

It was India's desire to establish peaceful and friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan that led to our Prime Minister's historic initiative to visit Lahore, resulting in the Lahore Declaration, and it is Pakistan which has trampled upon the Lahore Declaration and betrayed trust. On our part, we have been making consistent efforts to improve relations with Pakistan so that countries can live in amity and peace.

On other occasions, my delegation has expressed its disappointment that the CD has not been able to commence substantive work on the basis of a comprehensive programme of work. Our sense of disappointment only deepens as we approach the final stage of this year's annual session. At a time when the Conference should be devoting all its energies to finding agreement on substantive aspects of work, distractions and digressions are something that the Conference can ill afford.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of India, Ambassador Kunadi, for her kind words and for her statement. The distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan has asked for the floor. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): I am, of course, quite inured to listening to the grossest inexactitudes from the delegation of our neighbour, but on this occasion, let me perhaps try and clarify the situation as Ambassador Kunadi has expressed it. As I understand it, the document issued yesterday by the National Security Advisory Board of the Government of India is an official document. It has been stated that this is an articulation of the policy of so-called "minimum credible nuclear deterrence" - whatever that may mean. The document was introduced by the Prime Minister's Security Adviser, and therefore, it carries with it the weight of that office and of the official nature of the institution which has issued it. I would be very happy if the distinguished representative of India were to denounce this document and to state that it does not in any way reflect Indian policy or Indian intentions in the nuclear field. I think that all of us in the CD would be very happy to hear such a denunciation or enunciation by the distinguished representative of India. Unfortunately, I did not hear that in her statement.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan for his further statement. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Is there any other delegation which wishes to take the floor this morning? I see none. That, therefore, concludes our business today.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 26 August, at 10 a.m., and I should like to remind you that after that meeting, we will reconvene in informal mode to commence our consideration of the draft annual report to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.